

MEMORANDUM

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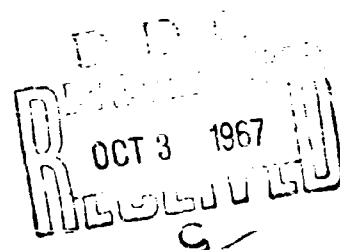
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SOVIET MILITARY POLICY
AT THE FIFTY-YEAR MARK

Thomas W. Wolfe

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PREFACE

This Memorandum is essentially an updated version of RAND Paper, P-3556, "Soviet Military Policy Trends Under the Brezhnev-Kosygin Regime," issued in May 1967. About a year ago the author, T. W. Wolfe of RAND's Social Science staff, discussed the same topics at greater length in RM-4913-PR, The Soviet Military Scene, June 1966. The present Memorandum contains enough new material to justify its distribution to appropriate Air Force officers and to other interested government personnel as a recent product of RAND's continuing program of research on Soviet military policy.

SUMMARY

In the half-century of its existence the Soviet Union has grown into one of the world's two military giants, and its industrial-technical base is commensurate with the status of a modern superpower. Its armed forces have met the supreme test of a great war and yet have remained the obedient servants of the successive Party leaderships. Those who direct policy at home and abroad have sought throughout to turn this growing military power to political advantage, in keeping with the Marxist-Leninist view of force as an agent of sociopolitical change.

Stalin's military policy after World War II was directed mainly toward the twofold aim of breaking the American nuclear monopoly and holding Europe hostage to Soviet conventional military power while that primary task was being achieved. It was left to Khrushchev to incorporate the nuclear-missile weaponry into the armed forces and develop strategic concepts that took account of the changed technological and political environment and defined the uses of the new weapons. The very destructiveness of the new weapons created a paradox, for, while it afforded an unprecedented potential for coercion, it simultaneously called for constraints on their use which reduced that political advantage. Khrushchev, therefore, convinced that a new world war was a prohibitively dangerous means for the attainment of communist advances and that even lesser revolutionary conflicts could escalate into major conflagrations, abandoned the Leninist tenet of the inevitability of war between communism and capitalism and

based his revised military philosophy on the primacy of the strategic deterrent. This radical position, which won out over those conservative elements that favored the all-round strengthening of Soviet armed might, resulted in major organizational and conceptual reforms of the military establishment. However, the programs carried out under Khrushchev, even with respect to nuclear forces, tended to stress the image somewhat more than the substance of strategic power; and by the end of Khrushchev's rule, in 1964, the Soviet Union was still "second-best" to the United States in its strategic posture.

Under the regime of Brezhnev and Kosygin, Soviet military policy has moved through a "standpat" period of reappraisal into the new leadership's own response to various major issues, both inherited and new. Although there has been no radical change of direction in Soviet defense preparations or in the strategic philosophy underlying them, the present government has sought to broaden Soviet capabilities and to enlarge the range of military options in ways that have significantly affected the Soviet Union's defense posture and its power relationship vis-à-vis the United States. The revival of internal doctrinal debates on some of the ramifications of military developments suggests that a new chapter in the evolution of Soviet military policy may have begun.

One indicator of present trends may be found in the allocation of resources to the military sector. Especially in the light of the regime's strong commitment to a domestic economic program and of its initial attempt to hold to a relatively low ceiling on military expenditures, it

is significant that arguments for larger defense expenditures have consistently prevailed, even at the cost of reduced investment in the domestic economy. Indications are that the difficulties of resource allocation between the civilian sector and the military and space programs continue unresolved, with the military probably taking an even larger bite out of the budget than is reflected in the published figures.

Allocations are necessarily linked to the leadership's estimate of the possibility of a general war and to its position on the political usefulness of war. In the author's opinion, the regime probably still regards a major war between the rival systems as unlikely, though the threats posed by the continuing war in Vietnam and a possible resurgence of Germany may detract from this assurance. On the question of war as an instrument of policy, however, there has been much public debate since the fall of 1965. Various writers have taken issue with the "fatalistic" view of theorists of the Khrushchev era who ruled out nuclear war as unacceptable because they foresaw no possibility of victory, and have posited situations and developments in the power relationship between the Soviet Union and its adversaries that would enhance the prospects of a Soviet victory in the event of war. One commentator, in proposing a massive military-technological effort, has maintained that breakthroughs in weaponry could "abruptly change the relationship of forces."

The determination of Khrushchev's successors to improve the country's technological base has been reflected from

the start in enlarged appropriations for scientific research, but it became apparent only in 1966, with evidence of an accelerated ICBM deployment program, that they were committed to a substantial buildup of the strategic delivery forces. Though the ultimate size and character of those forces remain uncertain, the strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, long in favor of the former, is clearly changing. Depending on the pace of the present Soviet programs as well as on the response of the United States, it is at least possible that the next few years will see a state of parity, or even a small margin of superiority for the Soviet Union, though the implications of such a development are as yet unpredictable.

Another major departure of the new regime from the policies of Khrushchev has been its decision to begin the deployment of anti-ballistic missile defenses. The extent of the ABM system, its effectiveness, and the Soviet Union's chief motive in launching it remain matters for speculation, as does the outcome of present American efforts to persuade the Soviets to reconsider their policy in the interest of avoiding a new upward spiral in strategic arms competition.

Spokesmen of the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime, partly reflecting the arguments of the professional military in favor of better-balanced forces and partly perhaps in response to nonnuclear conflicts such as those in Vietnam and the Middle East, have readmitted the possibility of involvement in nonnuclear warfare, or of warfare limited to tactical nuclear weapons "within the framework of so-called 'local' wars," and have acknowledged that Soviet

forces must be prepared for both nuclear and conventional operations. The regime would seem to be well aware of the military implications of such policy commitments as the support of the Arab nations in the Middle East imbroglio and of so-called "national-liberation struggles." How far the Soviet leadership, which continues to give first priority to strategic delivery forces (missiles, ASM-equipped bombers, and atomic missile-launching submarines) as the principal instruments of deterrence, is prepared to go in actually committing forces in local wars, or in investing in the resources needed to make such intervention effective, remains a critical question.

In the Vietnam crisis, the Soviet Union's problem is clearly complicated by the state of Sino-Soviet relations. Although Moscow has increased its support of Hanoi's military effort, it has not formally committed forces of its own, and seems inclined to continue limiting its contribution to furnishing equipment, training, and technical advice. So far, neither the war in Vietnam nor the friction with China, which has prompted some redeployment of Soviet forces in border regions, seems to have counseled any significant redistribution of the Soviet forces deployed against NATO Europe. Indeed, spokesmen of the regime emphasize that the main focus of Soviet interest still lies in Europe, with the emergence of closer U.S.-German relations allegedly the greatest threat to Soviet security.

Against this presumed threat, the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime has continued Khrushchev's policy of close military cooperation of the East European satellites through the

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Warsaw Pact, a policy that has improved the military efficiency of the Pact forces and their capability for joint action. But military integration has not necessarily brought the kind of political cohesion envisaged by Moscow; rather, the alliance seems beset with the political problems characteristic of coalitions in which the component countries seek ever more influential voices.

Finally, today's Soviet leaders, like all their predecessors, must deal with the perennial problems that attend relations with their own military. In the nuclear age, these fall into three main categories: problems of maintaining political control over the armed forces in times of extreme crisis; how to mesh industrial and military planning so as to be able to meet the resource-consuming appetite of modern weapons systems; and balancing the political authorities' traditional reluctance to grant the military an influential voice in policy formulation against their growing need for the military's professional expertise. Despite signs that all these are live issues, which are being debated in ways that suggest continuing sparring over the respective roles of the professional military and the Party, the evidence of the post-Khrushchev period would suggest that the political leadership still enjoys the last word.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The past half-century has seen the growth of the Soviet Union into one of the world's two strongest military powers, with an industrial-technical base commensurate to superpower status in the modern world. The Soviet armed forces themselves have not only met the supreme test of a great war, but through fifty years of sometimes turbulent Soviet history they have remained the obedient instrument of the successive Party leaderships that have controlled the destinies of the Soviet state. These are no mean accomplishments, and the present Soviet leaders may be pardoned if, as the Soviet Union prepares to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next month, they tend to look back with pride and satisfaction at the military aspects of Soviet growth and development.

At the same time, however, the present collective leadership under Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin can scarcely avoid giving sober thought to tasks and problems in the military field that bear upon the path the Soviet Union may follow in the years ahead. Indeed, as the Soviet Union has evolved into a more mature and complex society, placing subtle new demands upon those who direct its policies at home and abroad, so the problems of creating modern military power and of using it to political advantage have become more difficult and intricate.

In Stalin's day, following World War II, Soviet military policy had been oriented in a relatively straightforward way toward two primary tasks: the first and most urgent, to break the American nuclear monopoly; the second,

to hold Europe hostage to preponderant Soviet conventional military power while the first was being accomplished. Comparatively little attention was given under Stalin to a number of more subtle problems, such as determining the political utility of military power in the nuclear age and developing a body of strategic thought responsive to the changing technological and political environment of the modern world. It was left largely to Khrushchev in the decade or so after Stalin's death to preside over the process of incorporating the new weapons of the nuclear-missile age into the armed forces, along with devising appropriate concepts for their use.

This proved, for various reasons, to be a somewhat painful process. For one thing, Khrushchev found himself wrestling with the paradox that even as technology invested military power with an ever-increasing destructiveness and coercive potential, constraints upon its use also grew apace, tending to multiply the risks and narrow the opportunities for turning military power to political advantage. Although this was a paradox confronting all nuclear powers, it had particularly damaging effects upon the doctrines of a Marxist-Leninist leadership elite schooled to take a tough-minded view of force and violence as agents of revolutionary sociopolitical change. It led to revision of such Leninist tenets as the inevitability of war between the rival systems, helping to persuade Khrushchev that a new world war was too dangerous to serve as the "midwife" for another round of Communist advance, and that even lesser forms of revolutionary conflict might escalate into a large nuclear conflagration which could jeopardize the Soviet system itself.

In the immediate area of military policy, Khrushchev, as revisionist and reformer, likewise had a painful impact. The organizational and conceptual reforms which he imposed upon the Soviet military establishment were, at least in the eyes of conservative-minded marshals, too radical to be swallowed easily. Eventually, but not without generating a good deal of resistance, Khrushchev's military philosophy, based on the primacy of strategic deterrent power, won out. However, the military programs he sponsored had the side-effect of neglecting what many of his Soviet critics considered to be the need for "balanced, all-round strengthening" of the armed forces. Moreover, even with respect to the strategic nuclear forces he favored, Khrushchev's programs tended to emphasize the image of strategic power at the expense of substance, and by the end of his rule the Soviet Union still found itself in a "second-best" strategic posture vis-à-vis the United States.

This then, in briefest outline, was the background against which Khrushchev's successors took over the responsibility for Soviet military policy. During the three years since Khrushchev's removal from office in 1964, Soviet military policy under the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime has moved through an initial "standpat" period of reappraisal¹ into what may be described as the regime's own response to various major issues confronting it. Some of these are new problems growing out of developments

¹For discussion of this initial period of policy reappraisal, see the author's "Military Policy: A Soviet Dilemma," Current History, October 1965, especially pp. 201-202.

like the war in Vietnam or the Middle East crisis. Others, as we shall see, are mainly holdover issues from the Khrushchev era, set perhaps in a new context.

Before taking stock of specific developments in the field of Soviet defense posture and policy under the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime, one should perhaps make the general observation that there has been no radical change of direction in Soviet defense preparations or in the strategic philosophy underlying them since Khrushchev left the scene. That is to say, the post-Khrushchev period to date has been marked by no major organizational and theoretical reforms in the military domain comparable to what followed the death of Stalin. What has happened, rather, can be regarded as an effort to broaden Soviet military capacities in fields which suffered some neglect under Khrushchev's programs, while at the same time retaining the central feature of his military philosophy, the essence of which was to place primary emphasis on Soviet strategic nuclear-missile power. In this process, prompted perhaps by a belief of the present leadership that it must provide itself with a wider range of military options and divest itself of the political liability of having only a second-best strategic posture in future crisis situations, somewhat more attention has been given to strengthening the substance which stands behind the image of imposing Soviet military power cultivated by Khrushchev.

Although the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime may ultimately find that many of the military policy problems on its agenda will remain essentially intractable, nevertheless the steps it has taken thus far are having significant effects on the Soviet defense posture and upon the military

power relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States. Furthermore, changes in the Soviet Union's strategic position have been accompanied by revival of internal discussion, and sometimes argument, over the doctrinal and policy implications of Soviet military development, as well as by airing of questions pertaining to relations between civil and military authority, all of which not only testifies to the vitality of the issues involved, but also suggests that a new chapter in the evolution of Soviet military policy has opened under Khrushchev's successors. Let us turn now to some of the pertinent developments of the past year or two, beginning with a brief review of the question of defense claims upon Soviet resources -- a perennial problem sharpened by the new regime's commitment to an ambitious program of domestic economic reform and improvement.

II. RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS AND GENERAL WAR

Although the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime started out with the apparent intention of holding a ceiling on military expenditures, as indicated by its adoption of a 1965 military budget slightly smaller than Khrushchev's for the preceding year,² it rather soon became evident that the new leadership was to find no easy way out of the ever-perplexing problem of economic-defense priorities. The details of early contention around the issue of resource allocation may be found in a previous article by the present writer;³ here, suffice to say that military spokesmen first surfaced the issue with a series of theoretical arguments in 1965 implying that one-sided emphasis on war deterrence, as practiced under Khrushchev, could lead to neglect of all-round strengthening of the armed forces and to questioning of "the need to spend large resources on them."⁴

At about the same time that military writers were suggesting that there are no ruble-saving shortcuts to Soviet security, divergent views also showed up within the political leadership, with some leaders espousing resource priority for internal economic development while

²The announced 1965 military budget was 12.8 billion rubles, about 500 million rubles less than Khrushchev's 1964 defense budget.

³See Current History, October 1965, pp. 202-205. See also the author's The Soviet Military Scene: Institutional and Defense Policy Considerations, The RAND Corporation, RM-4913-PR, June 1966, pp. 62-72.

⁴Colonel I. Sidel'nikov, "V. I. Lenin on the Class Approach to Defining the Character of War," Krasnaia zvezda (Red Star), September 22, 1965.

others stressed the need for further strengthening of Soviet defenses to meet the threat posed by a deteriorating international situation.⁵ The extended crisis growing out of the war in Southeast Asia tended during 1965 and 1966 to buttress the position of the latter in the internal policy debate over economic-defense priorities. That they were gaining ground was indicated by a five per cent increase in the military budget for 1966 -- to 13.4 billion rubles -- and by Kosygin's observation at the 23rd Party Congress in April 1966 that "aggravation of the world situation" had adversely affected Soviet plans for economic development, preventing the Soviet Union from making "a substantial reduction in military expenditures and correspondingly greater capital investment in peaceful sectors of the economy."⁶

By the beginning of this year, it became still more clear that arguments for larger defense expenditures had prevailed, even at the cost of some setback of investment in other sectors of the economy. There was, for example, another increase in the published military budget for 1967 -- to 14.5 billion rubles, a boost of about eight per cent. These figures, it should be noted, are what the Soviet Union has chosen to announce publicly. Actual military expenditures, part of which are buried under other budgetary headings, are generally somewhat higher --

⁵For details, see Current History, October 1965, pp. 204-205.

⁶Pravda, April 6, 1966.

at least one-third higher, according to competent Western estimates.⁷

As matters stand today, the supposition that military requirements are actually taking a bigger bite out of Soviet resources than the published figures indicate is strengthened by delay in ratifying the new 5-Year Plan for the 1966-1970 period. The guidelines for this plan were issued in early 1966 and discussed at the 23rd Party Congress in April 1966, where Kosygin said the plan should be ratified within four or five months by the Supreme Soviet. However, at this writing more than a year later, only the current year's plan has thus far been approved, suggesting that unresolved difficulties of resource allocation between military-space programs and civilian sectors of the economy are still being threshed out.⁸ As we shall see later, one of the defense questions which has complicated Soviet planning appears to center around deployment of an ABM (missile defense) system, an undertaking that will involve very substantial new expenditures at a time

⁷ See, for example, J. G. Godaire, "The Claim of the Soviet Military Establishment," in Dimensions of Soviet Economic Power, Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, December 1962, pp. 35-46. See also article by Timothy Sosnovy, who argues that buried expenditures may be again as large as the published military budget, "The Soviet Military Budget," Foreign Affairs, April 1964, pp. 487-494.

⁸ Among other problems holding up approval of the Plan was apparently that of working out a pricing system for the economic reform program under which increasing numbers of Soviet enterprises are to be converted to a system using profitability as a criterion of economic performance.

when other investment will also have to be stepped up to meet the economic goals of the 5-Year Plan.

It goes without saying that the urgency accorded Soviet military preparations depends in no small way upon what the Soviet leadership thinks about the likelihood of a major war in today's world, as well as the questions whether war in the nuclear age has become obsolete as an instrument of policy. On the first issue, there has been a marked tendency in Soviet media since early 1965 to sound the theme that the "aggressive character of imperialism" is increasing, making it the "most important duty" of the Soviet Party and other Marxist-Leninist parties "not to permit an underevaluation of the danger of war."⁹ The new leaders themselves also have expressed concern that the danger of war has grown in light of U.S. "aggression" in Vietnam.¹⁰ The critical point, however, is what distinction to make between Soviet declaratory utterances on the likelihood of war -- which serve various purposes of internal argument and external propaganda -- and the private convictions of the leadership.

⁹For typical examples see General P. Kurochkin, "Strengthening of Aggressiveness -- A Characteristic Trait of Contemporary Imperialism," Krasnaia zvezda, July 9, 1965; Fedor Burlatskii, "Lessons of the Struggle for Unity," Pravda, June 24, 1965; Marshal R. Malinovskii, "October and the Building of the Armed Forces," Kommunist, No. 1, January 1967, p. 32.

¹⁰See speeches by Brezhnev, Pravda, September 11, 1965, and Izvestiia, October 24, 1965; by Kosygin, Krasnaia zvezda, July 1, 1965; by Suslov, Pravda, October 31, 1965; Kosygin interview with James Reston, The New York Times, December 8, 1965; Garbuzov in Pravda, December 8, 1965; Brezhnev speech at the 23rd Party Congress, Pravda, March 30, 1966.

Any opinion ventured on this subject is bound to be speculative. The present writer would be inclined to believe that the incumbent Soviet leadership still considers a major war between the rival systems to be unlikely -- if not thanks to benign U.S. intentions, then because of a combination of Soviet deterrent military power and the political forces generally described as the "world peace movement."¹¹ A qualification should probably be added, however, with regard to Soviet concern that a local war, such as the one in Vietnam, might get out of control, or that the policy of a resurgent Germany might one day draw the United States and the Soviet Union into war.

With regard to the second question posed above, it is a matter of some interest that doctrinal ferment has again arisen in the Soviet Union around the issue of war as an instrument of policy. As one may recall, during Khrushchev's tenure there had been a definite tendency to admit that nuclear war was likely to be militarily unmanageable and that Lenin's dictum on war as a continuation of politics was obsolete.¹² Since the fall of 1965,

¹¹For an elaborate Soviet analysis of how the combination of Soviet military power and "peace forces" abroad act to prevent a world war, see Major General N. Ia. Sushko and Colonel S. A. Tiushkevich, eds., Marksizm-Leninizm o voine i armii (Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army), 4th Edition, Voenizdat, Moscow, 1961, pp. 83-91.

¹²For discussion of the debate on war as an instrument of policy during the Khrushchev period, see the present author's Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1964, pp. 70-78.

however, beginning with an article by Lt. Colonel E. Rybkin in the semimonthly journal, Communist of the Armed Forces,¹³ this view has been frequently challenged. The Rybkin article attacked by name such prominent Soviet writers as General Nicolai Talevskii for having spread the "fatalistic" doctrine that it is no longer possible "to find acceptable forms of nuclear war." While agreeing that nuclear war would create great havoc and that one should do everything possible to prevent it, Rybkin asserted that one should not succumb to the doctrine that victory in nuclear war is impossible. To do so, he said, "would not only be false on theoretical grounds, but dangerous also from a political point of view."

He went on to argue that victory was feasible provided a country conducted a nuclear war so as to minimize damage to itself. According to Rybkin, there are two complementary ways to do this. One way lies in achieving "quick" defeat of the enemy, "which will prevent further destruction and disaster." The other lies in "the opportunity to develop and create new means for the conduct of war which can reliably counter the enemy's nuclear blows," an apparent reference to ABM defenses. At the same time, Rybkin warned that attainment of the requisite military posture would call for great effort, without which it

¹³"On the Essence of World Missile-Nuclear War," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil (Communist of the Armed Forces), No. 17, September 1965, pp. 50-56. Rybkin, although not widely known outside the USSR, is author of an earlier book in which he also argued that modern war, no matter how destructive, is bound to have politically significant consequences. See Voina i politika (War and Politics), Voenizdat, Moscow, 1959, pp. 25-26.

would be a dangerous mistake "to assume that victory was reliably assured" simply because of the "innate superiority" of the Communist system.

These views have been echoed in part by other military writers, but there has also been pointed criticism of certain aspects of Rybkin's argument. For example, in July 1966, Colonel I. Grudinin joined the attack on the "no-victory" notion promulgated in the Khrushchev era by people like Talenskii, but took Rybkin to task for adopting ideas which smacked too much of "bourgeois" theorizing about modern war.¹⁴ In particular, he argued that Rybkin had strayed from Marxist-Leninist analysis by pragmatically stressing the material balance of forces, or what in the Western idiom might be called "hardware factors," while failing to give sufficient weight to the ideological advantages of the Soviet system.

Still another military theorist to be heard from on this subject was Lt. Colonel V. Bondarenko, who, writing in September 1966, argued that the key to victory lies in a massive and imaginative research and development effort to assure military-technological superiority.¹⁵

¹⁴"The Question of the Essence of War," Krasnaia zvezda, July 21, 1966. Among other accounts critical of views expressed in the Khrushchev period on the unsuitability of Lenin's dictum on war and politics by such people as Talenskii, V. Zorin and N. Nikolskii, see N. Ia. Sushko and T. R. Kondratkov, eds., Metodologicheskie Problemy Voennoi Teorii i Praktiki (Methodological Problems of Military Theory and Tactics), Voenizdat, Moscow, 1966, pp. 33-34.

¹⁵"Military-Technical Superiority -- The Most Important Factor in Reliable Defense of the Country," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 17, September 1966,

Asserting that a properly managed research program should avoid the dangerous mistake of concentrating merely on improvement of existing weapons, he advanced the thesis that new breakthroughs in weaponry "can abruptly change the relationship of forces in a short period of time." A further contribution to the discussion stimulated by these various military theorists appeared early in 1967 in an unsigned editorial in Red Star.¹⁶ Noting that writers like Rybkin had taken a "creative, independent approach" to problems of modern war, the article stated at the same time that he and Grudin had unfortunately skirted some of the changes to be taken into account under nuclear-age conditions. Although the article itself reiterated doctrinaire claims of Communist victory if war should come, its main emphasis lay upon the need for "anti-imperialist forces" to oppose nuclear war "as a means for resolving international disputes," thus seeming to imply that theorizing on the prospects of victory should not be carried too far.

The revival in the Soviet Union of theoretical argument about modern war as a policy instrument does not necessarily mean that a hardline element has begun to urge a current policy shift involving much higher risk of war than hitherto. The central point stressed by the

pp. 7-14. For a detailed analysis of the Bondarenko article, see Benjamin S. Lambeth, The Argument for Superiority: A New Voice in the Soviet Strategic Debate, N-419(R), Institute for Defense Analyses, Washington, D.C., January 1967.

¹⁶"On the Essence of War," Krasnaia zvezda, January 24, 1967. See also Bernard Gwertzman, "Russians Debate Nuclear 'Victory'," The Washington Star, February 21, 1967.

various military theorists cited above seems to be not that the present "correlation of forces" would offer a good prospect of Soviet victory if war should occur, but that future changes in the power relationship between the Soviet Union and its adversaries might do so. This suggests, in turn, that Soviet military theorists may feel that the programs being carried out by Khrushchev's successors have improved the prospects of reversing the strategic power balance between the Soviet Union and the United States, making it worthwhile to reopen what had tended to become a closed chapter of discussion at the end of the Khrushchev period. Let us look next therefore at some of the steps taken under the present regime to repair the Soviet Union's strategic position.

III. STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although Khrushchev's successors evidently came into office dissatisfied with the strategic balance as it stood under Khrushchev, it was by no means clear at the time what they proposed to do about it. Their initial approach did indicate, if nothing else, a determination to improve the technological base upon which any effort to alter the balance in Soviet favor would ultimately depend. Appropriations for scientific research were stepped up,¹⁷ and, as made evident among other things by public display of new families of weapons,¹⁸ the Soviet military research and development program was pushed even more vigorously than hitherto. It was only after the new leaders had been in office for a year or two, however, that it gradually became apparent that they had committed themselves to a substantial buildup of Soviet strategic delivery forces.

As indicated by informed accounts which began to appear in the U.S. press in the summer and fall of 1966, an accelerated program of ICBM deployment was underway in

¹⁷Published Soviet allocations for scientific research have risen as follows: 1963 -- 4.7 billion rubles; 1964 -- 5.2; 1965 -- 5.4; 1966 -- 6.5; 1967 -- 7.2. Pravda, December 11, 1962; December 17, 1963; December 8, 1965; Izvestiia, December 16, 1966. A substantial amount of spending for military research is evidently included in these figures. See discussion in Nancy Nimitz, Soviet Expenditures on Scientific Research, The RAND Corporation, RM-3384-PR, January 1963, pp. 12-14.

¹⁸For accounts of Red Square displays of new equipment, see: Pravda, November 8, 1965; Krasnaia zvezda, November 10, 1965; The New York Times, November 8, 1964, May 9, 1965, November 8, 1965.

the Soviet Union.¹⁹ By the beginning of 1967, according to some of these accounts, the number of operational ICBM's had reached around 400 to 450, and deployment was continuing at a rate of more than 100 a year.²⁰ These figures compared with a total deployment of fewer than 200 ICBM launchers during the entire Khrushchev period. Not less significant than the rapid growth of numbers was a shift to new types of missiles in dispersed and hardened sites, in contrast with the ICBM force of the Khrushchev period, much of which consisted of early-generation missiles of "soft-site" configuration. In short, not only the rate of operational deployment of ICBM's was stepped up after Khrushchev's departure, but the qualitative character of the ICBM force had also been improved.

Meanwhile, as emphasized in the late Marshal Malinovskii's report at the 23rd Party Congress in April 1966, "special importance" has been attached to developing mobile land-based missiles for the strategic missile forces,²¹

¹⁹ Among such accounts, see "Russian Missiles Estimated at 400," The New York Times, June 9, 1966; Hanson W. Baldwin, "U.S. Lead in ICBM's Is Said To Be Reduced by Buildup in Soviet Union," ibid., July 14, 1966; William Beecher, "Soviet Increases Buildup of Missiles and Deploys a Defensive System," ibid., November 13, 1966; Beecher, "A New Round on Missiles," ibid., December 18, 1966. See also The Military Balance, 1966-1967, Institute for Strategic Studies, London, September 1966, p. 2.

²⁰ Richard J. Whalen, "The Shifting Equation of Nuclear Defense," Fortune, June 1, 1967, p. 87; George C. Wilson, "New Arms Spiral Feared," The Washington Post, April 9, 1967.

²¹ Krasnaia zvezda, April 2, 1966. For subsequent claims that Soviet development of a mobile, solid-fuel ICBM is among the factors upon which alleged Soviet military-technical superiority rests, see the previously-cited

a step which would further diversify the Soviet Union's strategic delivery potential. The same report pointed out that the Soviet Union continues to count upon the additional contribution to its strategic delivery capabilities provided by long-range bombers equipped with air-to-surface missiles for "standoff" attacks against enemy targets and by missile-launching submarines.²²

What the ultimate size and character of the Soviet strategic forces may be remains uncertain. It does seem clear, however, that the familiar situation of the past two decades in which the United States enjoyed marked strategic superiority over the Soviet Union is changing, and that a new correlation of forces could emerge in the next few years. The precise nature of a new strategic balance is not predictable, but if the programs undertaken by the present Soviet regime continue, a situation of "parity" or perhaps even some margin of "superiority" might be attained by the Soviet Union, depending in part upon what response the United States chooses to make.

article by Colonel V. Bondarenko in Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 17, September 1966, p. 9, and Colonel S. Tiushkevich, "The Modern Revolution in Military Affairs: Its Sources and Character," ibid., No. 20, October 1966, p. 23.

²²As is the Soviet custom, Malinovskii gave no figures for the size of the Soviet Union's long-range bomber and missile-launching submarine forces. According to recent Western estimates, the Soviet Union possesses about 200 heavy bombers (M-4 "Bisons" and TU-95 "Bears," some of which are used as tankers) and about 35 submarines capable of firing an average of three ballistic missiles each. In addition, about 40 submarines are equipped to fire cruise-type winged missiles, which could be used against land targets but which probably have a primary mission against the adversary's naval forces. See The Military Balance, 1966-1967, pp. 3, 5.

A great deal of controversy, into which we shall not enter here, attends the question of what constitutes "parity" or "superiority;" indeed, the point at which it becomes militarily meaningless to exceed a major nuclear adversary in numbers of weapons, megatonnage, or other attributes of strategic forces is something on which views differ widely not only in the United States, but apparently in the Soviet Union as well.²³ Whatever the military merits of the argument may be, however, the political implications of the strategic force equation are another matter. And it is in this regard that any substantial change in the previous strategic balance will be likely to pose far-reaching questions in the realm of Soviet policy. For example, in an environment of acknowledged strategic parity or superiority, will the Soviet leaders feel more secure and be inclined to play a more responsible and prudent status quo role in international politics? Or will they be prompted to seek fresh political gains from a more favorable correlation of forces, leading to pursuit of more aggressive policies which could introduce new elements of turbulence into international relations? Only the future holds the answer to such questions.

²³ For a recent U.S. example of such controversy, see the account in The New York Times, July 12, 1967, of a study by The American Security Council sponsored by the House Armed Services Committee, together with an answering statement by the Department of Defense. In the Soviet case, long-standing doctrinal commitment to the goal of both quantitative and qualitative superiority has sometimes been at odds with the view that amongst major nuclear powers "Superiority has become a concept which has no bearing on war." See G. Gerasimov, "Pentagonia, 1966," International Affairs, No. 5, May 1966, p. 28.

Another step taken by the new regime to bolster the Soviet strategic posture, and one which was held in abeyance under Khrushchev, relates to antiballistic missile defenses. As made known late in 1966 by the U.S. Government,²⁴ after some months of speculation in the press that ABM defenses were being installed around such cities as Moscow and Leningrad, the Soviet Union has embarked upon deployment of an ABM system -- the extent and effectiveness of which is still a matter of considerable debate in the West.²⁵ According to some accounts, it remains unclear at the moment whether the system is confined to Moscow alone, or whether another system covering a larger geographical area is also a part of the current ABM deployment.²⁶

²⁴The first official U.S. cognizance of "considerable evidence" that the Soviet Union was deploying an antiballistic missile defense system was given by Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara in an interview on November 10, 1966. The New York Times, November 11, 1966. Among earlier analyses of Soviet ABM activity, see: John R. Thomas, "The Role of Missile Defense in Soviet Strategy," Military Review, May 1964. According to one estimate attributed to American officials in early 1967, the Soviet Union had spent up to that time from \$4 to \$5 billion on development of its ABM system, compared with something over \$2 billion spent by the United States on development of the Nike-X missile defense system. See Hedrick Smith in The New York Times, January 29, 1967.

²⁵See, for example: Hanson W. Baldwin, "A New Round Begins in the Battle of Sword vs. Shield," The New York Times, November 27, 1966; Henry Gemmill, "The Missile Race," Wall Street Journal, December 14, 1966.

²⁶For discussion of the question whether the second system represents a defense against missiles or aircraft, see: Hanson W. Baldwin, "Soviet Anti-missile System Spurs New U.S. Weapons," The New York Times, February 5, 1967; and articles in The Washington Post, February 22, 23, 1967.

Speculation about the effectiveness of ABM measures taken thus far by the Soviet Union has been further heightened by public expression of differing opinion on the subject among Soviet military officials.²⁷

Why the present Soviet regime decided to deploy an ABM system and to claim a significant Soviet advantage in this field is not altogether clear. The Soviet leaders were undoubtedly aware that "first deployment" of ABM's has been widely regarded in the West as a step which could "destabilize" the strategic environment and set off a new round in the arms race. In light of the earlier example of the "missile gap" which in the late fifties and early sixties greatly stimulated U.S. missile programs and had the net result of placing the Soviet Union in a relatively

²⁷For several years, Soviet military leaders have publicly advanced claims for Soviet ABM progress, varying from outright assertions that the Soviet Union had solved the ABM problem to more guarded statements like that of Marshal Malinovskii in April 1966 that Soviet defenses could cope with some but not all enemy missiles. In February 1967, the conflicting pronouncements of several Soviet military men on this subject assumed new interest in light of the opening U.S.-Soviet dialogue on halting a potential ABM race. Two Soviet officers, Generals P. F. Batiskii and P. A. Kurochkin, took the optimistic position that Soviet ABM defenses could reliably protect the country. Shortly thereafter, two other prominent and senior military men, Marshals A. A. Grechko and V. I. Chuikov, voiced the more sober view that the Soviet Union did not yet possess defenses capable "in practice" of intercepting all incoming enemy planes and missiles. For press accounts of these statements, see: "Russians Say Anti-missile System Will Protect Them From Attack," The New York Times, February 21, 1967; "Russians Concede Missile Net Flaw," ibid., February 23, 1967; "Soviet Cities Vulnerable, Red Defense Chief Says," The Washington Post, February 23, 1967.

unfavorable position with respect to strategic forces, one might have supposed that the Soviet leaders would think twice about stirring up Western fears of an "ABM gap." However, Soviet predilection for building strategic defenses, combined with possible overcoming of earlier technical obstacles in ABM development, seemingly prevailed over the economic costs and the risks of stimulating the strategic arms race in the judgment of the present leadership.

Whether this decision will hold up in the face of American efforts to persuade the Soviet government to reconsider its ABM policy remains to be seen.²⁸ At this writing, nothing concrete has emerged from the exploratory U.S.-Soviet talks initiated in late February 1967, apart from signs that the U.S. initiative may have aroused fresh internal policy debate within the Soviet government.²⁹

²⁸U.S. hopes of persuading the Soviet Union to agree to a mutual "freeze" of some sort on ABM deployment were voiced by President Johnson in his State of the Union message on January 10, 1967. Since then, diplomatic soundings on the matter have proceeded in a climate of alternative doubt and cautious optimism about the prospects of reaching an understanding. The general Soviet tone, set by Kosygin in an interview in London on February 10 and again during his visit to the United States in June 1967, has been on the cool side, although the Soviets have not closed the door to possible negotiations. See: "Kosygin Is Cool to Missile Curb," The New York Times, February 10, 1967; "Soviet ABM Shift Denied," The Washington Post, February 18, 1967; Transcript of Kosygin News Conference at the UN, The New York Times, June 26, 1967.

²⁹Among such signs was publication of a Pravda article on February 15, 1967 in which Kosygin was made out to be more receptive to the idea of an ABM moratorium than his London remarks warranted. Two days later Western

However, by agreeing to explore the matter, and by suggesting that any future negotiations should also take up the issue of strategic delivery forces in which the United States still enjoys a putative numerical advantage,³⁰ the Soviet leaders at least seem to be giving second thought to the possibility of improving the Soviet Union's relative position via the arms control route, rather than banking solely on a further unilateral buildup of Soviet offensive and defensive strategic forces.

Under the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime, steps taken to bolster the Soviet strategic posture³¹ have been accompanied

news agencies reported that the article, written by F. Burlatskii, had been repudiated by Soviet sources who claimed that the regime's position on ABM negotiations was negative, as would be made clear in a new article. The article did not appear, suggesting an internal policy quarrel. In March, a strong statement of the military case for going ahead with the ABM program appeared in a Red Star article stressing the importance of strategic defense measures. Both the article and its timing suggested an attempt to influence the policy debate over ABM. See Lt. General I. Zavyalov, "On Soviet Military Doctrine," Krasnaia zvezda, March 31, 1967.

³⁰ See Hedrick Smith, "Soviet Would Widen Talks Asked by U.S. on Missiles," The New York Times, February 22, 1967; Kosygin Press Conference, ibid., June 26, 1967. The U.S. margin over the Soviet Union in intercontinental strategic missiles, according to published figures reflecting the situation as of October 1966, was around 1,450 land- and sea-based missiles for the United States against about 470 for the Soviet Union, a ratio of about 3 to 1. See George C. Wilson's article in The Washington Post, April 9, 1967.

³¹ In addition to steps discussed in the text, two other matters with potential implications for the Soviet strategic posture are worth mention. One was Soviet interest in development of an orbital delivery system, as evidenced both by statements of military officials and

by fresh attention to the possibility of nonnuclear warfare in various potential theaters of conflict, including Europe. Reflecting in part the pressure from some professional military leaders to achieve better-balanced forces than those inherited from the Khrushchev period, and in part perhaps a reaction to such nonnuclear conflicts as those in Vietnam and the Middle East, there has been a tendency to recognize more explicitly than hitherto that Soviet forces must be prepared for a wide range of situations involving either nuclear or conventional operations.³²

With increasing frequency over the past year or two, Soviet military spokesmen have departed from the once standard litany of immediate strategic nuclear escalation, suggesting that hostilities involving possessors of strategic nuclear arsenals might not automatically call them into use. As some military men put it, Soviet military doctrine does not "exclude" the possibility of nonnuclear warfare or of warfare limited to tactical nuclear weapons

parade display of a large missile (SCRAG), claimed to have orbital capability. The other was renewed public emphasis on civil defense preparations, accompanied in January 1967 by reorganization of the civil defense system. See the author's The Soviet Military Scene, p. 101; Colonel General V. F. Tolubko interview in Trud (Labor), November 17, 1965; Raymond H. Anderson, "Soviet Places a New Emphasis on Civil Defense," The New York Times, November 23, 1966; Marshal V. Chuikov, "The Soviets and Civil Defense: The Business of All and of Each," Izvestiia, June 15, 1967.

³²It should be noted that arguments urging better preparation of the Soviet theater forces for conventional operations had begun to appear even before Khrushchev's political demise. See the present author's comments in Current History, October 1965, p. 206.

"within the framework of so-called 'local' wars," which could "take place even in Europe."³³ Another writer -- without, however, mentioning Europe -- stated that Soviet military doctrine today calls for the armed forces to "be prepared to conduct world war as well as limited war, both with and without the use of nuclear weapons."³⁴ Among the more recent expressions of the view that nuclear weapons should not be treated as "absolutes," especially in theater force operations, was that by Marshal I. I. Yakubovskii, newly appointed commander of the Warsaw Pact forces, who asserted in July 1967 that the efforts of the Party and the government had improved "the capability of the ground forces to conduct military operations successfully with or without the use of nuclear weapons."³⁵

Although there has clearly been recognition that the theater forces should be better prepared for situations in which it might not be expedient to bring Soviet strategic

³³ See Colonel General S. Shtemenko, Nedelia, No. 6, January 31-February 6, 1965, and Major General N. Lomov, "The Influence of Soviet Military Doctrine on the Development of the Military Art," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 21, November 1965, pp. 16, 18. Other military writers, in discussing the possibility of postponing or limiting the use of nuclear weapons, made the familiar Marxist-Leninist point that this would depend on the class interests and political goals of those involved. See Colonel V. Morozov and Lt. Colonel E. Rybkin, "Problems of Methodology in Military Affairs," ibid., No. 4, February 1967, p. 93; Sushko and Kondratkov, eds., op cit., pp. 107-108.

³⁴ Colonel N. Kozlov, "The USSR Armed Forces in the Period of Building Communism," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 4, February 1967, p. 80.

³⁵ "Ground Forces," Krasnaia zvezda, July 21, 1967. See also Major General V. Reznichenko, "Trends in the Development of Modern Battle," ibid., June 28, 1967.

nuclear power to bear, this does not mean that reliance upon Soviet nuclear arms, in either a military or political sense, has been abandoned by the new regime, as some Western observers have tended to conclude from such articles as that by Yakubovskii.³⁶ Not only does the continuing large Soviet investment in a strategic force buildup testify to the contrary, but even proponents of better-balanced forces still concede priority to capabilities for conducting general nuclear war.³⁷ Indeed, some Soviet professional opinion has insisted that any war in a place like Europe "would immediately assume the broadest dimensions,"³⁸ while such a well-known military authority as Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii has upheld the view that the responsibility of Soviet strategy is to plan for the use "above all of missile-nuclear weapons as the main means of warfare."³⁹ In an article in early 1967 not long before his death, Marshal Malinovskii, the Soviet Defense Minister, stated categorically that in Soviet defense planning "first priority is being given to the strategic missile forces and atomic missile-launching submarines --

³⁶ See, for example, Victor Zorza's interpretation, "Soviet Defense Shift Seen," The Washington Post, July 22, 1967.

³⁷ See, for example, Sushko and Kondratkov, eds., op. cit., p. 299; Reznichenko in Krasnaia zvezda, June 28, 1967.

³⁸ Major General V. Zemskov, "The Escalation of Madness," Krasnaia zvezda, August 3, 1965.

³⁹ Marshal V. Sokolovskii and General M. Cherednichenko, "On Contemporary Military Strategy," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 7, April 1966, pp. 59-66.

forces which are the principal means of deterring the aggressor and decisively defeating him in war."⁴⁰

On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that the present Soviet regime, in surveying such policy commitments as those which it has made to back the Arab nations in the Middle East imbroglio or to support elsewhere what are known in the Communist lexicon as "national-liberation struggles," can scarcely afford to ignore the military implications of such commitments. One of these implications would seem to be that the Soviet Union must give further attention to the maritime-air-logistic elements of power needed to project its military influence into local conflict situations without having to invoke the threat of immediate nuclear holocaust, a requirement congenial to the arguments of those who urge better-rounded forces. As a matter of fact, the present regime has moved in this direction, building on measures initiated in the Khrushchev era to improve Soviet amphibious and airlift capabilities, to train the reactivated marine forces (naval infantry) in landing operations, and to secure base arrangements growing out of Soviet military aid programs abroad.⁴¹ The dispatch of Soviet naval units, including special landing vessels, to the Mediterranean in connection with the Arab-Israeli crisis was a conspicuous example of this trend.⁴² How far the Soviet

⁴⁰Kommunist, No. 1, January 1967, p. 34.

⁴¹See the present author's, The Soviet Military Scene, pp. 121-122.

⁴²See "Soviet Is Sending 10 More Warships to Middle East," The New York Times, May 31, 1967; Hanson W. Baldwin, "Soviet Naval Power," ibid., June 2, 1967; "Soviet Warships To Visit 2 Egyptian Ports Today," ibid., July 10, 1967.

leadership may be prepared to go, however, either in actually committing its own forces in local situations or in investment of the resources necessary to make such intervention effective, remains among the critical questions on its agenda.

IV. SOVIET POLICY FOR VIETNAM AND THE WARSAW PACT

The unresolved war in Vietnam has posed for the Soviet leadership a somewhat analagous policy problem, which is further complicated by the strained state of Sino-Soviet relations. Although the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime has gradually increased its support of Hanoi's military effort during the past couple of years, especially by furnishing SA-2 missiles and other air defense matériel, it has not sanctioned the formal commitment of Soviet military forces to the war in Southeast Asia.⁴³ Presumably, in the interest of avoiding a direct confrontation with the United States, the Soviet leaders would prefer to keep their military involvement limited to furnishing equipment, technical advice and training to Hanoi's soldiery, although they have occasionally spoken of permitting "volunteers" to participate, which would still be something less than formal intervention. Beyond experimenting with volunteers, however, the Soviet leadership's room for maneuver would seem to be constricted not only by the risk of major escalation, but by the fact that geography makes direct Soviet intervention difficult. Charges of Chinese refusal to cooperate in the overland shipment of Soviet aid to North Vietnam have pointed up this difficulty.⁴⁴

⁴³For a discussion of the Soviet Union's gradually increasing military aid to Hanoi see The Soviet Military Scene, pp. 109-124.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 112, 173.

With regard to China, the Soviet Union evidently has had to consider military problems potentially a good deal more serious than interference with shipments to Vietnam. In the spring of 1966, for example, the Soviet leadership reportedly felt obliged to castigate Peking for telling the Chinese people that "it is necessary to prepare themselves for a military struggle with the USSR."⁴⁵ Since that time, Sino-Soviet relations have grown still more inflamed in the climate of Mao's "cultural revolution," amid rumors of frontier clashes and mutual military precautions in the border territories of the two countries.⁴⁶ Although an outright military collision between the two Communist powers is still perhaps only a remote possibility, the new Soviet regime doubtless has been obliged to reassess its military preparations with such a contingency in mind. In this connection, according to Peking's allegations, there has evidently been some internal redeployment of Soviet forces in the Asian regions bordering China.⁴⁷

Neither the Vietnam conflict nor friction with China, however, seems to have counseled any significant reposition of Soviet military power deployed against NATO

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 137, 174. See also The New York Times, March 24, 1966.

⁴⁶ See Victor Zorza, "Soviet Press Clamors Over Chinese Military Threat," The Washington Post, November 10, 1966; "Chinese Report Soviet Border Clash," ibid., February 14, 1967; Charles Mohr, "Observers Speculate That Tensions Along the Soviet-Chinese Border May Be Rising," The New York Times, February 21, 1967.

⁴⁷ See remarks on this question to a group of Scandinavian journalists by Chinese Deputy Premier Chen Yi, The New York Times, July 21, 1966.

Europe. For the Soviet leaders to consider troop withdrawals in Europe while the war in Vietnam continues would, of course, leave them vulnerable to Chinese allegations of "collusion" with the United States to ease the European situation and permit the transfer of American troops to Vietnam.⁴⁸

Sensitivity to Chinese criticism, however, probably has no more than an incidental bearing on Soviet military deployments in Europe. The main factor seems to be that, despite the war in Vietnam and the Soviet Union's increasing stake in Asian affairs generally, priority still applies to maintaining the Soviet Union's European power position and its ability to deal with the political and military problems of Europe, not the least of which, in Soviet eyes, is that of keeping a resurgent Germany in check. Indeed, Soviet spokesmen under the new regime have re-emphasized that the main focus of Soviet interest continues to lie in Europe, where, as the Kremlin sees it, the emergence of a closer U.S.-Bonn axis within NATO allegedly constitutes the greatest threat to Soviet Security.⁴⁹

⁴⁸For a sample of such Chinese allegations, see the Peking Review, No. 8, February 18, 1966, p. 10.

⁴⁹See Gromyko's remarks before the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 23, 1966, The New York Times, September 24, 1966. Other Soviet commentary, such as a radio broadcast by Mikhail Stepanov in September 1966, has cited the need to strengthen the Warsaw Pact forces in Europe as a "shield against U.S.-German aggression," on the grounds that despite the war in Vietnam the main focus of U.S. military strategy has not shifted from Europe to Asia, and therefore it would be an error to accept assertions in the Western press

The military role of the Warsaw Pact in Soviet policy has changed considerably since the Pact was created in 1955, largely as a diplomatic counter to West Germany's entry into NATO. Originally the Pact played little part in Soviet military planning, which was predicated on the assumption that Soviet theater forces would bear the burden of any military undertakings in Europe in which the Soviet Union might become involved. Around 1960-1961, however, Khrushchev instituted a new policy of closer military cooperation with the East European members of the Pact, aimed both at improving the collective military efficiency of the Warsaw alliance and at tightening its political cohesion in the face of "polycentric" tendencies in East Europe.⁵⁰

This policy has been continued under the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime. In particular, the process of joint training and modernization of the East European forces, commensurate with their enlarged responsibilities, has gone forward. Today these forces total over 900,000 men, organized in some 60 divisions, of which about half are at combat strength and readiness, according to Western

that the "situation in Europe has stabilized and there is no threat there to world peace." Moscow radio broadcast, September 6, 1966. These assertions were part of a general Soviet propaganda broadside in the fall of 1966 and early 1967 against the alleged threat of a new Bonn-Washington axis. See, for example, M. Voslenskii in Krasnaia zvezda, September 13, 1966; Anatoli Antonov commentary, Moscow broadcast to North America, September 26, 1966; General M. Kazakov, "Fraternal Alliance," Pravda, May 14, 1967.

⁵⁰For a discussion of this policy shift, see the author's "The Warsaw Pact in Evolution," in Kurt London, ed., Eastern Europe in Transition, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Md., 1966, pp. 207-225.

estimates.⁵¹ Taken together with the Soviet forces deployed in East Europe -- which consist of 20 divisions in East Germany, four in Hungary and two in Poland, plus sizeable tactical air elements and tactical missile units -- the aggregate Warsaw Pact forces in Europe today represent a rather impressive military potential.

From the Soviet viewpoint, however, the fruits of the new policy course toward the Warsaw Pact have not been entirely sweet. While the military efficiency and capability for joint action of the East European components have been improved, the political aim of tightening bloc unity and cohesion through military integration seems to have gone somewhat awry. Instead of being bound closer to Soviet interests, the East European regimes have tended to press for a more influential voice in Pact matters affecting their own interests, such as the sharing of economic and military burdens, and for the formulation of alliance strategy. Rumania, first to jump the traces in the economic field, also has taken the lead in challenging Soviet control of military affairs.⁵² Partly perhaps as

⁵¹The Military Balance, 1966-1967, pp. 6-8; Raymond L. Garthoff, "The Military Establishment," East Europe, September 1965, pp. 13-14. For a critical analysis of the much-publicized Warsaw Pact joint field exercises, which questions their military utility mainly on the grounds that they have been conducted by relatively small formations of Pact forces, in contrast with the NATO practice of wide-scale unit participation in annual exercises, see Stanley Dziuban, The Warsaw Pact Maneuvers: Proof of Readiness or Psychological Warfare?, N-369(R), Institute for Defense Analyses, August 1966.

⁵²See the present author's Soviet Military Power and European Security, The RAND Corporation, P-3429, August 1966, pp. 38-41. Among reported Rumanian demands was that

a response to Rumanian recalcitrance, but probably more because the focus of Soviet political and strategic interest is directed toward Germany, a rather marked regional differentiation has emerged within the Warsaw alliance between countries of the "northern" and "southern" tiers.⁵³

In sum, there is growing evidence that the Warsaw Pact is evolving into an alliance beset with the familiar interplay of coalition politics, rather than representing a fully compliant instrument of Soviet policy. It would probably be wrong, however, to jump from this to the conclusion that the Soviet Union has ceased to exercise a predominant role in the affairs of the Warsaw bloc. The residual animosities of the Cold War, skillful Soviet play upon East European fears of a resurgent Germany and, above all, the Soviet military presence in East Europe, continue to place limits on the ability of the Warsaw Pact countries to shape their own policies independent of Soviet interests.

command of the Warsaw Pact forces be rotated to include non-Soviet officers. A delay of some three months in appointing Marshal Yakubovskii to succeed Marshal Grechko as Pact Commander in July 1967 tended to bear out speculation that the command issue had arisen within the Pact.

⁵³The "northern tier" countries -- East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union -- have frequently been alluded to by Communist sources as the "first strategic echelon" of the Warsaw Pact. These, of course, are the countries most immediately involved, politically and militarily, with the question of West German aspirations in Central Europe. In the Vlatva joint exercise in Czechoslovakia in September 1966, Hungary for the first time participated on a token basis with the other northern tier countries, while Poland did not directly take part.

POLITICAL-MILITARY RELATIONS UNDER THE NEW REGIME

Finally, to complete this survey of Soviet military policy today, a few words are in order on the state of political-military relations, an area of recurrent tension in the 50 years of Soviet history,⁵⁴ and one which has taken on new significance in light of special problems generated by the nuclear age. Broadly speaking, these problems fall into three categories: those of maintaining political control over the armed forces in time of crisis and amidst the hazards which a nuclear-missile world may hold; those of meshing industrial-military planning to cope most effectively with the resource-consuming appetite of modern weapon systems; and those of balancing military influence on Soviet policy formulation against the need of political authorities to call increasingly upon the professional expertise of the military leadership.

Signs that all of these questions are alive in the Soviet Union have cropped up under the present regime. An unusual amount of attention, for example, has been given to the command and control problem under nuclear-age conditions, ranging from its technical aspects⁵⁵ to

⁵⁴For an exhaustive treatment of this question, see Roman Kolkowicz, The Soviet Military and the Communist Party, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1967.

⁵⁵See Tiushkevich, in Kommunist Voozruzhennykh Sil, No. 20, October 1966, pp. 22-23; Sushko and Kondratkov, eds., op. cit., pp. 69, 243-265, 279. In the latter volume, it was stated that technical innovations in command and control constitute the third major stage in the military-technical revolution of modern times, the first two stages being the introduction of nuclear weapons and of missiles, respectively.

the need for creating the "necessary politico-military organs" to insure coordinated leadership of the country in emergencies, taking cognizance of the fact that "modern weapons are such that the political leadership cannot let them escape its control."⁵⁶ Lessons drawn from mistakes committed by the Soviet leadership prior to and in the initial stages of the last war have been cited also to make the point that under modern conditions, especially in the event of war beginning with a surprise blow, the leadership's "correct and timely evaluation of the situation prior to a war, and the reaching of initial decisions" have taken on greatly increased significance.⁵⁷

The enhanced importance under modern conditions of tying together more effectively the economy and the planning and procurement of weapons for the armed forces has been a theme sounded frequently in Soviet writing, often with undertones of a civil-military competition for resources.⁵⁸ A suggestion that this issue might be

⁵⁶ See Major General V. Zemskov, "For the Theoretical Seminar: An Important Factor for Victory in War," Krasnaia zvezda, January 5, 1967. See also Grudinin, ibid., July 21, 1966; Lt. General Zavyalov, ibid., March 31, 1967.

⁵⁷ Marshal A. Grechko, "25 Years Ago," Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal (Military-Historical Journal), No. 6, June 1966, pp. 10, 15.

⁵⁸ An emphatic statement of the need to work out a coordinated "military-economic policy" to insure weapons production in "properly substantiated proportions" appeared in an April 1967 article by Colonel A. Babin, who also stressed strict Party control of such "complex tasks." See "The Party -- Leader of the USSR Armed Forces," Krasnaia zvezda, April 6, 1967. A more recent treatment of the question, with emphasis upon "correct and effective use of resources" to "insure solution of all military-

creating pressure for restructuring of traditional Defense Ministry arrangements along more civilian-oriented lines than in the past arose following the death of Marshal Malinovskii, the Defense Minister, in March 1967, when there was a spate of rumors in Moscow that his successor might be Dmitri Ustinov, a Party civilian with a long career in the management of defense industry.⁵⁹ Had Ustinov taken over the post customarily occupied by a military professional with command prerogatives over the armed forces, it seems likely that rather sweeping organizational changes would have followed, perhaps with the effect of giving the professional military even less immediate influence on resource decisions than it now possesses. As it turned out, however, the regime shied away from such a radical step, if it had in fact seriously contemplated it, and after a delay of about two weeks Marshal A. A. Grechko was appointed in April 1967.⁶⁰ His

economic tasks," was offered by Colonel Ia. Vlasovich, "Modern War and the Economy," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 12, June 1967, pp. 27-33. See also: Malinovskii in Kommunist, No. 1, January 1967, p. 34; Sushko and Kondratkov, eds., op. cit., p. 79; Zavyalov, Krasnaia zvezda, March 30, 1967 (first of two articles).

⁵⁹ See Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Kremlin Looking for a McNamara To Rule Its Brass," The Washington Post, April 23, 1967; Raymond H. Anderson, "Soviet Affirms Party Rule Over the Military Forces," The New York Times, April 7, 1967.

⁶⁰ At the same time Grechko's appointment to succeed Malinovskii was announced on April 12, it was also made known that three other officers had been elevated in the Defense Ministry hierarchy. They were Marshal Yakubovskii and Generals S. L. Sokolov and I. G. Pavlovskii, men in their middle fifties. This move had the effect of introducing younger blood into the top military echelon, which has been dominated by an over-age generation of World War II marshals.

background as Warsaw Pact commander for seven years and his record as a middle-of-the-roader among the Soviet marshals made him an appropriate choice for the job, especially if the regime wished to avoid a controversy which might have exacerbated the issue of military influence upon Soviet policy.

That this issue too remains a live one under the present regime seems to be indicated by the reappearance in print of what was a familiar dialogue in Khrushchev's day between advocates of the case for a growing military share in the formulation of military doctrine and strategy and defenders of the principle of Party dominance in all aspects of military affairs. Marshal Sokolovskii, an eminent spokesman during the Khrushchev era for more professional military influence upon the strategic planning process, was one of those who again pressed this viewpoint. By way of getting across the point that strategic planning in the nuclear age demands a high level of military expertise, Sokolovskii in April 1966 cited the American case where, according to him, "direct leadership" of the top strategic planning body, the National Security Council, "is exercised by a committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," even though its nominal head is the President.⁶¹

The other side of the argument, to be sure, was also emphatically restated. Following a Central Committee

⁶¹ Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii and Major General M. Cherednichenko, "On Modern Military Strategy," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 7, April 1966, pp. 62-63. Another example of the tendency to stress the importance of the military contribution to doctrine and strategy may be found in the book edited by Sushko and Kondratkov, Methodological Problems of Military Theory and Practice, pp. 93-95.

plenum which met in closed session in December 1966, a series of forceful reminders of the Party's supremacy in military affairs appeared in the Soviet press. Among the most trenchant of these was an article in early January 1967 by Major General Zemskov, who argued that solution of the complex tasks of modern war involving great coalitions and the energies of whole societies "falls completely within the competence of the political leadership."⁶² And as if in direct rebuttal of Sokolovskii, the article pointed out that the need for a single "supreme military-political organ" through which the political leadership would exercise its role had been recognized not only in the Soviet Union, but in other countries like the United States, where "the National Security Council, headed by the President, is such a supreme governmental military-political organ."

It would hardly be warranted, however, to suggest that sparring of this kind over the respective roles of the professional military and the Party betokens a serious challenge to the policy prerogatives of the latter. The very fact that the Party can summon advocates for its view at will from within the military establishment indicates as much. In short, so far as the evidence of the post-Khrushchev period permits one to judge, the Soviet political leadership still enjoys the last word, as was the case during the first half-century of Soviet history.

⁶²See previously cited article by Zemskov, Krasnaia zvezda, January 5, 1967. Another emphatic restatement of the thesis of Party supremacy appeared in Colonel Babin's article in Krasnaia zvezda, April 6, 1967. For a discussion of the similar dialogue in Khrushchev's day, see the author's Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 100-109.

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10. ABSTRACT During the fifty years' existence of the Soviet Union, its leaders have sought to turn growing military power to political advantage. Although there has been no radical change of direction in Soviet defense preparations or in strategic philosophy, the present government has undertaken a substantial buildup in strategic delivery forces and ABM defenses. The possibility of involvement in "local" wars is admitted, but how far the Soviet Union is prepared to go in committing forces and resources remains a critical question. The perennial problems that attend the relations of Soviet leaders with their own military remain: maintaining political control over the armed forces in times of crisis; meshing industrial and military planning; and balancing their traditional reluctance to grant the military an influential voice in policy formulation against their growing need for the military's professional expertise.		11. KEY WORDS USSR--Military Foreign policy Defense policy Counterinsurgency and insurgency Politics	